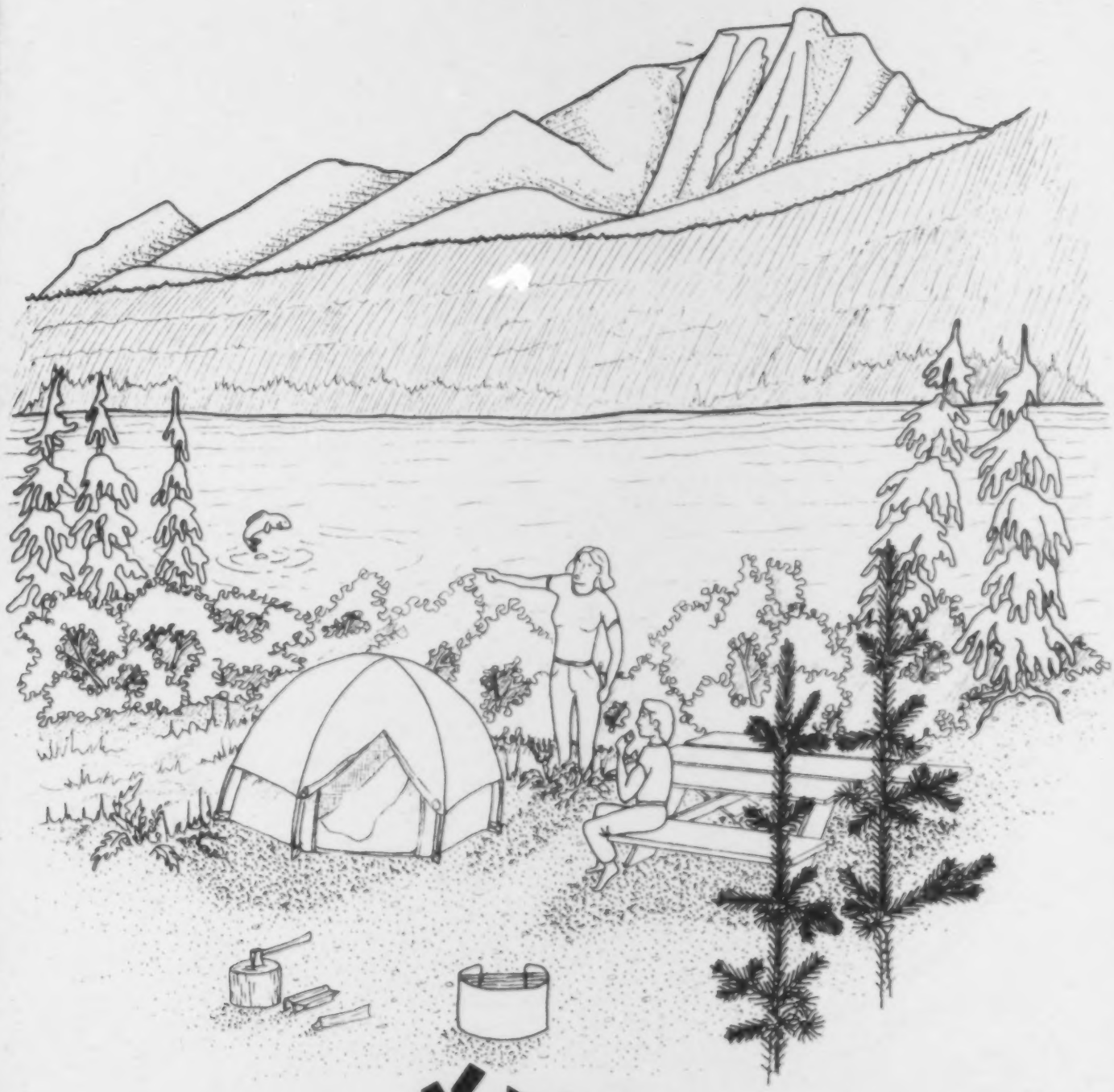
CAMPGROUND SYSTEM PLAN

1992



Yukon
Renewable Resources

TR-92-5

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CAMPGROUND SYSTEM PLAN

PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION BRANCH

FINAL REPORT

JUNE, 1992

Yukon
Renewable Resources

TR-92-5

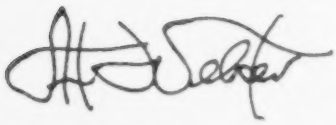
Message From the Minister

This is one of four system plans developed by the Department of Renewable Resources to guide the creation of a Yukon parks system into the next century. The plans follow the Yukon Conservation Strategy and the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Policy approved by Cabinet in 1991.

They are a way of protecting the Yukon's environment while enhancing its recreation potential and they represent the government's commitment to cooperative management of Yukon's natural, cultural and recreational resources.

I would especially like to extend my appreciation to representatives of public interest groups who participated in the plan's development. They provided the broad perspective needed to ensure the plans address the concerns of all Yukon people.

The Campground System Plan organizes campgrounds into three categories: highly developed destination campgrounds, standard highway campgrounds and backcountry campsites with rustic facilities.



Art Webster
Minister of Renewable Resources

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Policy (1990) established three kinds of campgrounds, and identified the need to develop this Campground System Plan. This Plan includes an assessment of the need for campgrounds, identifies appropriate standards, and outlines how the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Section will plan, develop and manage the campground system.

The Campground System Plan establishes maximum levels of development to be allowed in each kind of campground, groups existing campgrounds into three sub-categories, provides guidelines for the selection of additional campgrounds, and establishes standards for management and development of the system. The Plan also allows for the efficient use of available resources in support of tourism and the private sector.

The plan lists campground facilities already in existence, and provides guidelines for determining priorities and budget requirements.

This document is composed of five sections:

Section 1, Introduction, includes a brief summary of the document and the purpose of the plan.

Section 2, Background, includes information on existing campgrounds and present responsibilities.

Section 3, Goals and Objectives, includes detailed information about the goals and objectives of the Campground System Plan.

Section 4, Campground Classification, includes an explanation of the various kinds of campgrounds, establishes selection criteria, and identifies the level of facility development allowed in each campground category.

Section 5, Campground Management, includes explanations of campground policies and outlines how they will be applied in each category of campground.

Section 6, Implementation Methodology, outlines how the Campground System Plan will be implemented.

2. BACKGROUND

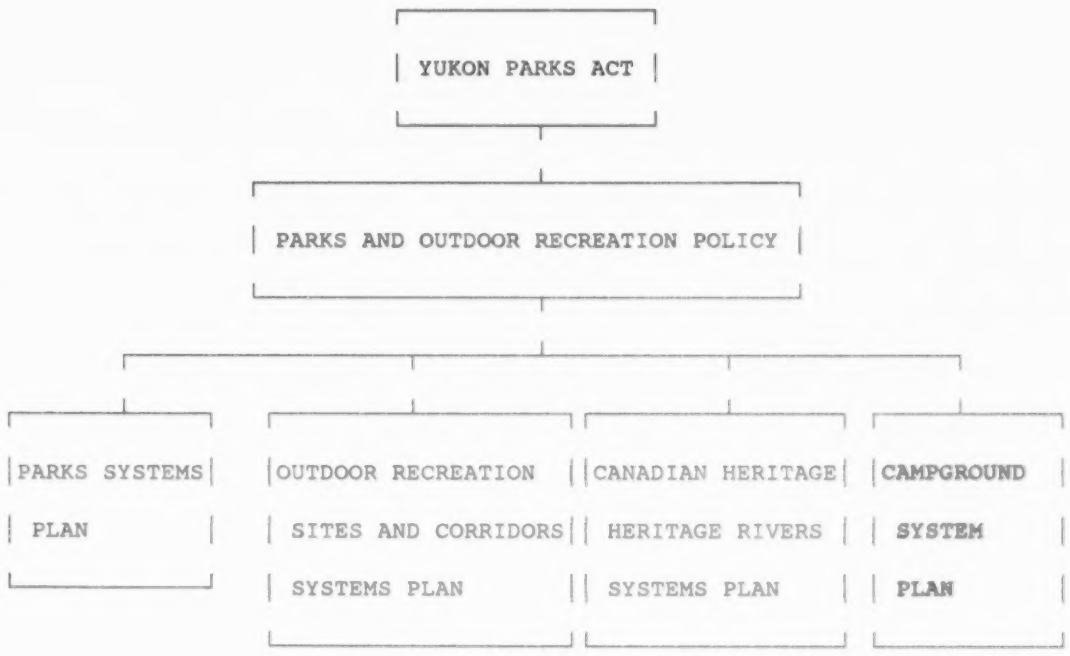
The Yukon's first informal campgrounds were established in the 1940s, when the Yukon Forest Service wanted to group travellers together along major road networks, to assist in fire prevention. Between 1946 and the late 1960s, approximately 40 camping areas were developed. Forestry Officers were responsible for developing and maintaining campgrounds in their districts. No overall Yukon-wide plan was needed, and campground standards were determined by Forestry Officers.

In 1972, the Yukon Government, Tourism and Information Department, assumed responsibility for the Forestry Service campgrounds. The campgrounds consisted of a number of randomly spaced, generally unserviced campsites that were intended solely for free overnight accommodation along Yukon highways.

In 1976, the Parks and Historic Sites Division was created, in the Department of Tourism. This division began planning for an organized system of campgrounds and recreation sites throughout the Yukon. In 1977, the Parks and Historic Resources Sites Division was transferred to the Department of Renewable Resources, and has since evolved into the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Section. This section is now responsible for the identification, selection, official designation and management of Yukon parks, recreation sites, and campgrounds in the Yukon.

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Section has made considerable progress in bringing campgrounds up to standards consistent with the Design Guidelines for Yukon Parks. The Government has undertaken design modifications for campground facilities, in an effort to accommodate changing recreational facilities and equipment and meet the increasing demands for outdoor overnight camping space associated with the pursuit of recreational activities. Campgrounds are maintained in accordance with the Campground Maintenance Standards Manual.

The following chart illustrates the relationship of the Campground System Plan to the Parks and Outdoor Recreation Policy, the Yukon Parks Act, and other systems plans.


YUKON PARKS ACT
PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION POLICY
PARKS SYSTEMS PLAN
OUTDOOR RECREATION SITES AND CORRIDORS SYSTEMS PLAN
CANADIAN HERITAGE HERITAGE RIVERS SYSTEMS PLAN
CAMPGROUND SYSTEM PLAN

3. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Goal

The overall goal of the Campground System Plan is to establish a formal method for selecting, designating and managing of campgrounds in the Yukon.

3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the Campground System Plan are:

- to organize existing and future campgrounds into a manageable system;
- to establish criteria for the selection of new campgrounds;
- to establish development levels for each category of campground; and
- to define management principles for all categories of campgrounds.

Areas which have no potential for conflict of land and resource use are the most desirable for campground development.

4. CAMPGROUND CLASSIFICATION

The Parks and Outdoor Recreation Policy has identified three kinds of campgrounds: Destination Campgrounds, Highway Campgrounds, and Backcountry Campgrounds.

Destination Campgrounds are established adjacent to Yukon highways, as well as within Territorial Parks, in proximity to significant recreational, natural, or historic features that are suitable for active use. These campgrounds are developed to encourage users to stay for extended periods. The most suitable locations will have a combination of diverse activities such as fishing, boating, hiking, interpretation, rock hounding, photography, and/or nature appreciation. This type of campground can be found at Herschel Island, Kusawa Lake, Aishihik and Ethel Lake, all of which feature several of the activities mentioned.

Highway Campgrounds are established adjacent to Yukon highways, at locations which offer limited active recreational opportunities. The campgrounds of this type will be developed to provide basic accommodation for the convenience of overnight travellers. This kind of campground has been established at Rancheria and Wolf Creek.

Backcountry Campgrounds are established adjacent to recreational or natural features, at suitable distances along trails or rivers, or on lakes. Campgrounds of this type will provide minimal facilities for the convenience of backcountry travellers. No campgrounds of this type exist now. Such a campground will be developed in the newly designated Canadian Heritage River, the 30-Mile Section of the Yukon River.

4.1 Campground Development Standards

Highway, and Destination Campgrounds all will have a basic level of facility development: fire pits, garbage containers, kitchen shelters, picnic tables, pit toilets, wood shelters, and water well or water supply.

Additional facilities may be provided in each campground category, in accordance with the following:

Destination Campgrounds

amphitheater,
beach,
boat launch and docks,
group fire pits,
hiking trails, and
interpretive trails.

Highway Campgrounds

basic facility development only

Backcountry Campgrounds

boat docks,
bear proof food caches,
equestrian corrals, and
backcountry shelters.

The level of development for each category of campground will vary depending on proximity to natural, historic, and recreational features. Generally, the greater the potential for additional and sustainable activities, the higher the level of development.

4.2 Campground Site Selection Criteria

In general, the Campground System Plan provides for the evaluation of potential campgrounds on the basis of the following factors:

- . distance to special features or resources;
- . access to visitor services;
- . level of current land use; and
- . ability of the area to support existing/proposed use.

Specific campground areas are selected based on the following criteria:

a) Proximity to Special Features

Where special recreational, natural or cultural features are present in the area of a campground, the value of the recreation experience is increased. An attempt will be made to include these features within campground boundaries.

b) Access to Visitor Services

Campgrounds are developed to provide remote camping experience in a recreational setting. To maintain this sense of remoteness and avoid conflicts with commercial campgrounds, new campgrounds will not be developed within community boundaries. Where communities expand their boundaries to include campgrounds, those communities will be asked to assume responsibility for the campground. All new campgrounds will be separated from existing commercial campgrounds by a distance of at least of 30 k.m.

c) Level of Current Land Use

Existing land use practices will be analyzed to determine their potential effects on any new campground developments. Consideration will be given to the level of current land use in the area including the level of use for privately owned campgrounds, trap lines, mineral claims, forestry, and agricultural operations. Sites will not be developed where there is the potential for conflict among different types of land use, detrimental effects on the camping experience, or limitations on the life of the proposed facility.

d) Ability of the Area to Support Use

The POR Section will review the conditions of Topography and Hydrology, and the Ecology to determine the ability of an area to support use.

Topography and Hydrology

The slope of the site and how well it drains can affect the cost of development substantially. Consequently, areas that are level to gently sloping, and moderately well-drained, offer the most suitable sites for development.

Ecology

Areas of mixed-forest cover demonstrate a healthy diverse ecology that is desirable for campgrounds. These sites are the most resilient, recovering fairly quickly from damage associated with campground use (such as ground-cover trampling).

4.3 Campground Separation

The traveling distance between existing Yukon campgrounds will determine where new highway and backcountry campgrounds will be developed. The following criteria apply for the separation distance between these classes of campgrounds, provided there are no campgrounds in other categories, or commercial campgrounds along the way:

a) highway campgrounds - 100 km;

b) backcountry campgrounds - approximately one day's travel.

These criteria are explained in greater detail below.

a) Highway Campgrounds

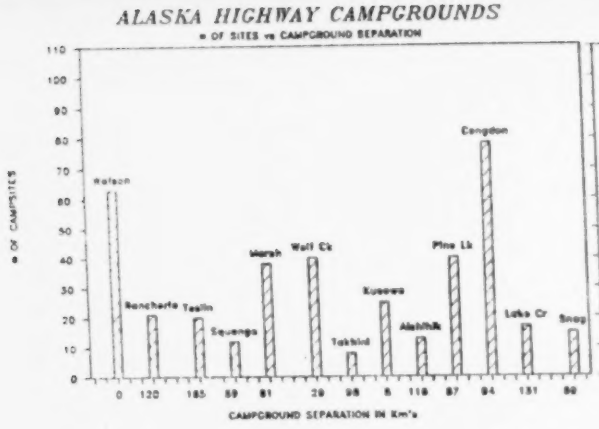
Highway campgrounds are located along major travel routes at a separation distance of approximately 100 Km. This practice evolved during the late 1970s and early 1980s. Research has indicated that the majority of campground users seemed to travel in multiples of 100 Km/day. Potential daily points of origin for highway travellers are also important - for example, travellers who overnight in the area of Liard Hot Springs would travel to Watson Lake the following day. The government has tried to accommodate these travelling patterns.

Travel distances appear to be increasing, due to improvements to the Alaska Highway. The policy for campground separation may need to be re-evaluated as continued improvements allow visitors to travel even greater distances. Re-evaluation would be based on statistical data collected from the self-registration system and traffic counters. However, it is unlikely that the basic separation distance will change, as campground users still tend to travel in multiples of 100 Km.

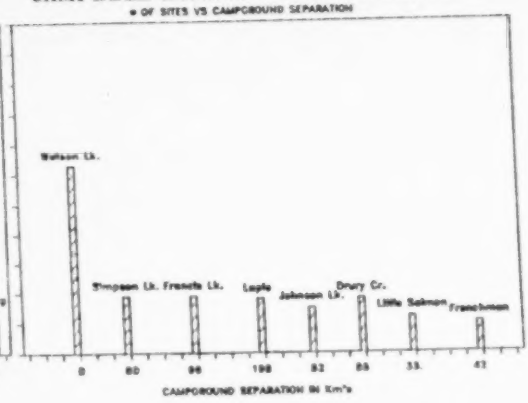
b) Backcountry Campgrounds

Backcountry campgrounds are located on trails, rivers or lakes, at approximately one day's travel from the access points, depending on the likely method of transportation. For example, on a hiking trail a campground would be situated approximately one day's hike from the access point.

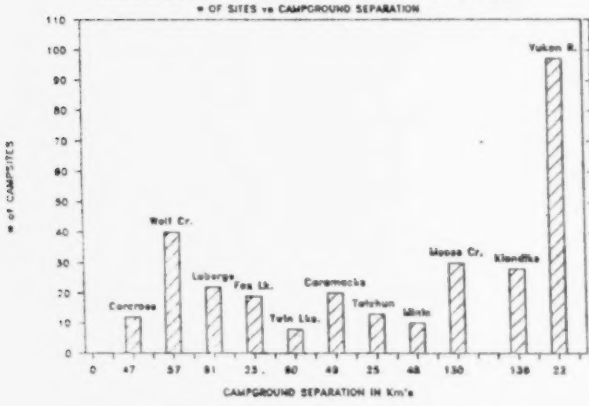
ALASKA HIGHWAY CAMPGROUNDS



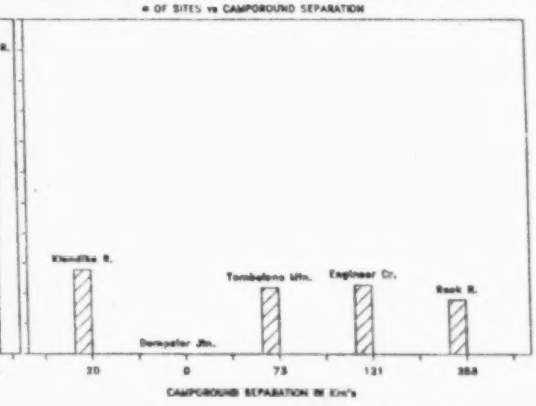
CAMPBELL HIGHWAY CAMPGROUNDS



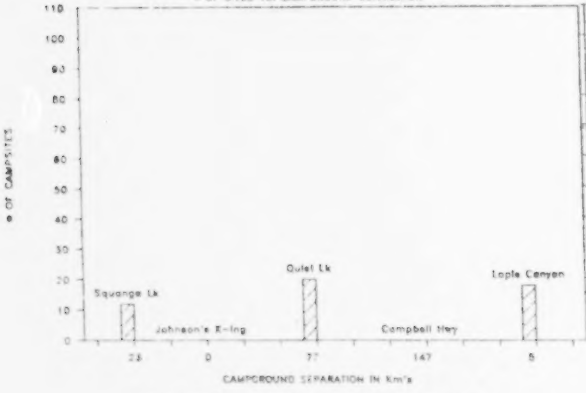
KLONDIKE HIGHWAY CAMPGROUNDS



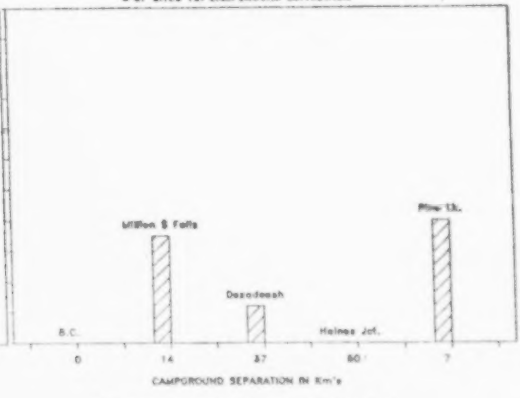
DEMPSTER HIGHWAY CAMPGROUNDS



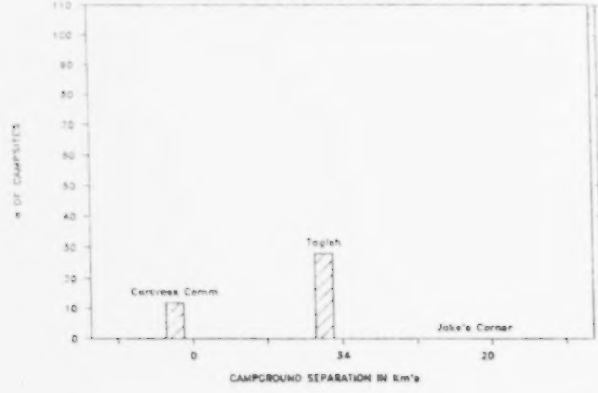
CANOL HIGHWAY CAMPGROUNDS



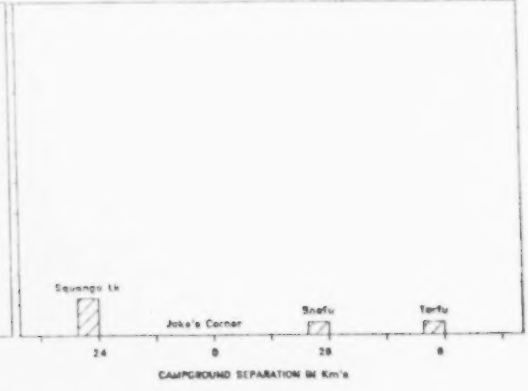
HAINES HIGHWAY CAMPGROUNDS



TAGISH ROAD CAMPGROUNDS

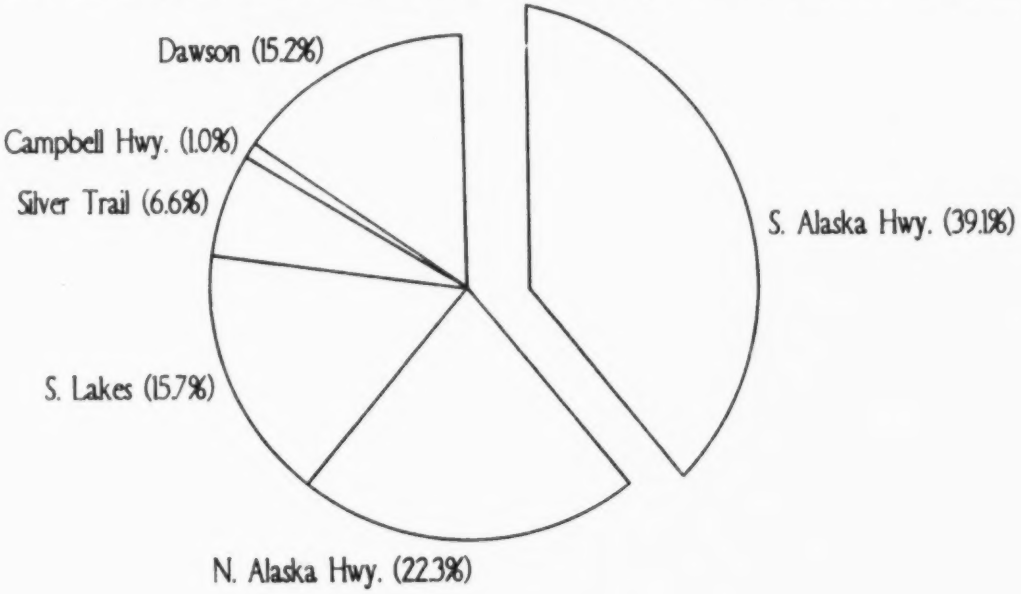


ATLIN ROAD CAMPGROUNDS

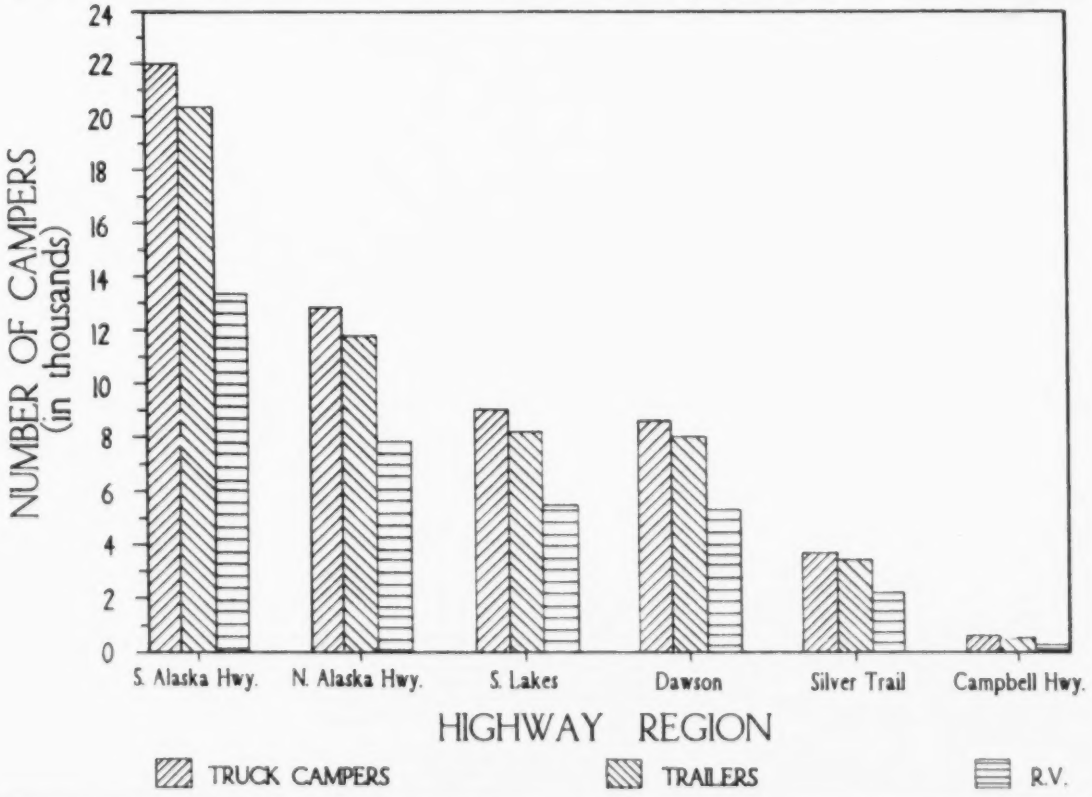


1987 STATISTICS

% of CAMPGROUND VEHICLES by HIGHWAY REGION



TOTAL CAMPERIZED VEHICLES by HIGHWAY REGION



5. CAMPGROUND MANAGEMENT

The following management goals apply to all campground classes.

5.1 Natural/Cultural Features Management

Significant natural/cultural features will be managed to sustain their original significance, resources, and visual values.

5.2 Recreational Features Management

Recreational features will be managed to promote sustainable use.

5.3 Visitor Activities Management

User activities will be managed to preserve special features/attractions, and to protect potential user experiences. Visual and audio buffers will be maintained between activity locations. In addition, public use will be monitored to ensure that, where possible, facilities are compatible with the activity demands.

5.4 Maintenance

Campgrounds will be maintained in accordance with the standards outlined in the Campground Maintenance Standards Manual, to ensure maximum facility life and public safety. For example, backcountry campgrounds will be maintained on a semi-annual basis, with garbage managed on a pack-in pack-out basis.

5.5 Environmental Protection

All campgrounds will be designed and developed in accordance with the Design Guidelines for Yukon Parks, to ensure appropriate environmental protection of campground resources. Sites which have undergone environmental damage will be rehabilitated to sustain the usefulness of the area and/or facilities, or closed temporarily to allow natural recovery. In extreme or unusual situations, experts may be contracted to provide advice on environmental protection.

5.6 Public Safety

All campgrounds will be designed and managed with public safety in mind. Facilities will be developed in accordance with public health and safety regulations, and the current National Building Code.

5.7 User Fees and Fee Collection

User fees will be charged in accordance with the fee schedule approved by the Yukon Government Management Board.

5.8 Concessions

The development of commercial facilities within campgrounds will not be permitted. Reliance is placed on local businesses to provide goods and services to campground users. Some appropriate commercial recreational services may be allowed within campground boundaries. Such services will be evaluated on a site-by-site basis, with recreational service proposals submitted to the Director of Parks, Resources, and Regional Planning.

6.0 SYSTEMS IMPLEMENTATION

The existing campground inventory includes 44 sites. These campgrounds have been evaluated according to the site selection criteria (Section 4.2), in order to assign them to an appropriate campground category. During this process, the main attributes associated with each campground have been assessed:

- . proximity to commercial facilities,
- . past use levels,
- . associated recreational/natural features,
- . current/potential development levels,
- . special separation, and
- . land availability/ownership.

Proposed classifications are listed in Section 6.1.

Selection of future campgrounds will be based on the same criteria. Public input on the selection process will be received through public consultation. The need for new developments will take into account the proposed campground location; proposed level of facility development; and the ability of proposed sites to support that level of development.

Unsolicited comments and proposals for new developments will be welcomed. Such proposals and comments will be reviewed on the basis of their ability to meet the goals and objectives of the Campground System Plan. Where commercial facilities can meet expressed needs, their development will be promoted through the Tourism Service Sector.

6.1 Proposed Classification for Existing Campgrounds

Campground Categories

Destination - D.
Highway - H.
Backcountry - B.

CAMPGROUND	CLASS
ALASKA HIGHWAY	
Watson Lake	D
Rancheria	H
Teslin	H
Squanga	H
Marsh Lake	D
Wolf Creek	D
Takhini River	D
Kusawa Lake	D
Aishihik Lake	D
Pine Lake	D
Congdon Creek	D
Lake Creek	H
Snag Jct.	H
KLONDIKE HIGHWAY	
Carcross	H
Lake Laberge	H
Fox Lake	D
Twin Lakes	H
Caramacks	H
Tatchun Creek	H
Minto Landing	H
Ethel Lake	D
Moose Creek	H
Klondike River	H
Yukon River	D
HAINES ROAD	
Dezadeash	H
Million $ Falls	H
DEMPSTER HIGHWAY	
Tombstone Mountain	D
Engineer Creek	H
Rock River	H
CANOL HIGHWAY	
Quiet Lake	D
ATLIN ROAD	
Snafu Lake	D
Tarfu Lake	D
NAHANNI RANGE ROAD	
Nahanni Range Road	D
SILVER TRAIL	
Five Mile Lake	D
ROBERT CAMPBELL HIGHWAY	
Simpson Lake	D
Francis Lake	D
Lapie Canyon	H
Johnson Lake	H
Drury Creek	H
Little Salmon Lake	H
Frenchman Lake	D
Nunatuk	D
Tatchun Lake	D
HERSCHEL ISLAND	D

Upon approval of the system plan, the campgrounds will be gradually upgraded to meet the standards of their assigned category. Upgrading will be phased-in as capital funding becomes available. Redevelopment proposed within each campground will be outlined in future annual editions of the Campground/Outdoor Recreation Site Redevelopment Plan. Annual capital budgets for campgrounds will be submitted in accordance with this plan, to maintain a systematic approach in meeting the goals and objectives of the Campground System Plan.

In summary, it is anticipated, that implementation of this Campground System Plan will assist in meeting the outdoor recreational expectations of Yukoners and visitors.